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## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'COMIC LIFE' THROUGH DIRECTED READING ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

SUARDI

Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo

[Suardisalbon01@gmail.com](mailto:Suardisalbon01@gmail.com)

### Abstarct

The research was conducted to know the effectiveness of the use of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities to increase students' reading comprehension. It covered students' literal comprehension, interpretive comprehension and applied comprehension. And to find out the students' interest in teaching reading comprehension toward the application of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities to increase students' reading comprehension.

The research method employed was quasi experimental. This research was designed into two groups, namely experimental group and control group. Each group consisted of 32 students. The sample was chosen by applying cluster sampling technique. The researcher used multiple choice of reading test both in experimental and control groups. The data obtained through the test were analyzed by using inferential statistic through SPSS 16.0 program.

The research findings showed that Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities gave higher contribution to the students' reading comprehension. The mean score of pre- test of the experimental and control group was not significantly different. The mean score of post- test of the experimental group was higher than the control group ( $75.62 > 56.87$ ). Besides, all the three level of comprehension improved after the treatment, the literal level got the highest improvement with 9.69 point. It was followed by interpretive level which got 21.25 point and applied level which got 42.19 point improvement. the students were interested in learning reading comprehension through Directed Reading Activities who got the mean score 84.52. it means that hight interest. This led to the conclusion that the application of Comic Life trthough Directed Reading Activities increased the students' reading comprehension. It means that the use of Comic Life trthough Directed Reading Activities in teaching reading is very effective to increase the students' reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** Comic Life, Directed Reading Activities, Reading Comprehension.

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui keefektifan penggunaan Komik Kehidupan melalui Kegiatan Membaca Diarahkan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa yang meliputi pemahaman literal, interpretasi dan penerapan. Dan juga untuk*

*mengetahui apakah siswa tertarik dalam mempelajari pemahaman membaca dengan menggunakan Komik Kehidupan melalui Kegiatan Membaca Diarahkan.*

*Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Eksperimen Semu. penelitian ini menggunakan dua kelompok yaitu kelompok eksperimen dan control. Setiap kelompok terdiri dari 32 orang siswa. Sample dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik klaster random. Data yang diperoleh dari hasil tes dianalisis dengan menggunakan program SPSS 16.0.*

*Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Komik Kehidupan melalui Kegiatan Membaca Diarahkan memberikan kontribusi yang lebih besar terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa. Nilai rata-rata pada pre – tes untuk kedua group eksperimental dan control menunjukkan tidak ada perbedaan yang signifikan. Sementara, nilai rata-rata siswa pada post – test dikelas eksperimental lebih tinggi dari kelas control ( $75.62 > 56.87$ ). selain itu, semua tingkatan membaca meningkat setelah diberikan perlakuan, peningkatan pada literal adalah 9.96 poin. Diikuti oleh tingkatan interpretasi dengan peningkatan 21.25 dan tingkat penerapan adalah 42.19 poin. Kesimpulannya adalah penggunaan Komik Kehidupan melalui Kegiatan Membaca Diarahkan dalam pengajaran membaca sangat efektif untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa.*

## **Introduction**

Teaching a language must cover all of the language skills especially reading. Reading is an important thing which is always improved in language learning process, because it is one way to get information in written form. To get information in reading is not easy. The reader must use thinking and intellect to get comprehension of the text because when the reader read a text and he cannot get information of the text, he will not get the main idea.

Pike in Eloff (2004) explained that there are three processes to get information when readers are reading text. They are semantic, syntactic and graphophonic process. In Semantic process, the reader will interpret the reading text to get the meaning of the text and the main idea of reading. Syntactic process is getting information by using connection between words, sentences and paragraphs. Graphophonic process is getting information of the text by using visualisation and decoding.

Furthermore, Patel and Jain (2010: 114) said that Reading is not only a source the information and pleasurable activity but also a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. Therefore, reading can increase language's knowledge such as semantic, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

The way to increase students' reading comprehension was students' interest. Students' interest was needed because from interest, teacher could begin the teaching process well. Students could be happy when they were interested in the subject. When students were not happy in teaching they can feel bored. Therefore, they were not ready to study. Goleman in Deporter (2008) stated that when the brain accepts intimidation or stress, it can influence the capacities of brain to rational thinking

because the brain will be small and listlessness to access of higher order thinking skills.

The good media can increase students' interest and comprehension in reading. Media can give good effect in teaching. Media is a tool to help teacher to explain the lesson and help the students to easy understand. Besides that, it can help the teacher to be creative in teaching. Arsyad (2007) said "Media is mediator to send information from sender to receiver, such as photo, radio, image, TV, and magazine." From this definition media is useful to use in classroom, not only for teacher but also for students.

There are some kinds of media in teaching and they can be used in teaching process, such as visual, audio, and audio- visual media. The most important thing of teacher in using media is considering the situation and condition. It means that, teacher must know the students' emotion, feeling and desire. According to Gagne in Arsyad (2007: 4) said "Media of learning is the tools of using to explain material in teaching."

The example of media can be used in reading is comic life. Comic life is one of the kind of comic right now. It makes from software called 'Comic Life' too. Comic Life is different from other comic because it can make it easy and Comic Life is colourful comic. So that comic life is not only for increasing the students' interest in reading but also making the teacher more creative to make media in teaching.

In other hand, Thacher (2007) expalined that there are two foundations to use comic in the classroom, they are:

The first, for the pre-reader, a comic can be purely graphical in nature and help provide practice with sequencing as well as concrete to abstract transitions using illustrations instead of written words. The written component of a comic can be introduced when the early readers are ready to connect words with images. Comics can help early readers with language acquisition problems by providing visual clues to the context of the narrative.

The second, for advanced readers more, comics can contain all the complexity of 'normal' written material which the student must decode and comprehend, such as puns, alliteration, metaphors, symbolism, point of view, context, inference, and narrative structures. A comic can also be a stepping-stone to more complex and traditional written work. A single pane in a comic can represent paragraphs worth of written material in a manner that is enjoyable and effective for the early or challenged reader.

Students can be easy to understand the story by using comic because comic has picture to help the students to interpret the story before the students read the text in the comic. Picture in comic help the reader to get information what the text will tell. McCloud (2008) said "Comic is pictures and other symbols can be juxtaposition in a model to give information and aesthetic from the reader." Therefore, most of the students like to read book which has picture than reading book without pictures.

Comic has its own power to use it in teaching because comic can increase students' interest through their combination of pictures and story. Beside that comic

can make students easy to understand the story from visualisation. Reader needs visualisation to give decoding of reading text. Comic helps the students to do imagination when reading process is running. Nagi and Scott in Hirai (2009) said that "Visual language can include such as graphics, images, gesture and body language."

In this research the researcher used the Directed Reading Activities strategy. Ruddell (2005) explains that The Directed Reading Activity is designed by Betts in 1946 to increasing students' comprehension of text. In this strategy, there are five steps to improve students reading comprehension, they are (1) Preparation of reading, (2) guided silent reading (3) comprehension development (4) skill development (5) extension and follow up activities. From this steps the teacher can guided the students in learning reading comprehension without awkward in teaching process.

According to Herber in Ruddell (2005) has been redesigned this strategy, the Directed Reading Activities strategy has any variations so the teacher can be interpreting and applying in the classroom depend on the teacher creation and the situation in their classroom. When the teacher will interpret and apply this strategy must know the purpose of the strategy. This strategy is focusing to increase students' reading comprehension. This strategy is suitable with the elementary level in learning reading comprehension. But we can be also used in other level in reading skill.

In this research, the researcher used media of Comic Life and strategy of the Directed Reading Activities. Media of Comic Life and Directed Reading Strategy were integrated in teaching reading comprehension in classroom.

From the background above the researcher conducted research under title "The Implementation of Comic Life to Increase Students' Reading Comprehension".

The specification of this study was made based on the research questions as follows:

1. Does the implementation of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities increase students' reading comprehension?
2. Are the students interested in the use of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities in reading comprehension?

## **Literature Review**

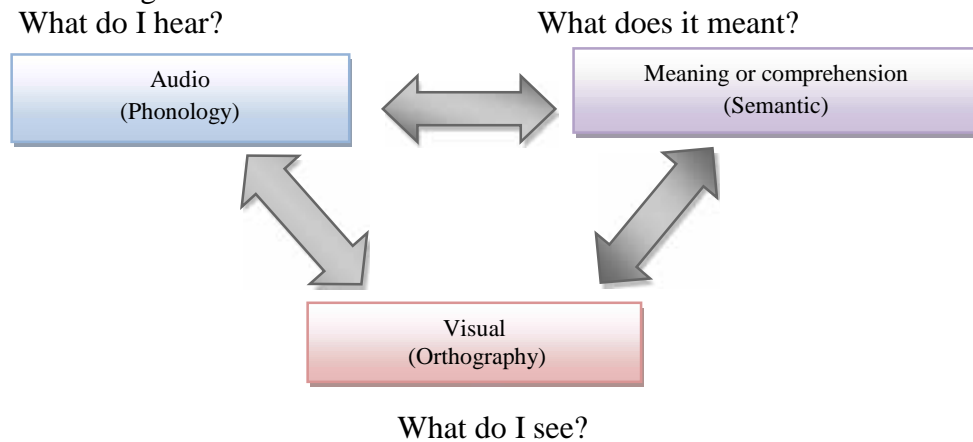
### **1. Reading Comprhension**

Reading comprehension is still problem in reading learning. Some of learners are involved in reading comprehension. As foreign students in reading activities, they just focus on vocabulary and syntax in text of reading so that the reading comprehension is bothered.

According to Hirsch in Hirai (2010) reading comprehension depends on the reader fillings in the blanks and silent supplying enough of the unstated premises to make coherent sense of what is being read.

In other hands, McNeil in Hidayani (2008) reading comprehension means searching for meaning actively uses the knowledge of the world and text to understand each new thing.

From definition above the researcher can conclude that Students' reading comprehension is determined of reading process. According to Sousa (2012: 174) to be success in reading, we need three component of neuron in our mine: preparation of visual (orthography), preparation of audio (phonology) and preparation of meaning or comprehension (semantic). To be clearly about this process of reading from Sousa sees the chart below:



(Sousa, 2012: 174)

**Figure 2.1 The process of reading**

This statement is the same statement of pike in Elloff (2004: 91) in reading text, readers use three sources of information, namely semantic, syntactic and graphophonic information. So from this process we can know how to get comprehension well in reading.

In other hand, Harber in Martha (2005) said that there are three level of reading comprehension. They are:

- a) Literal comprehension refers to meaning derived from “reading the lines”, in which the reader constructs meaning that accurately reflects the author’s intended message. Literal comprehension is text explicit: that is, answers to literal questions require reader understanding of ideas stated directly in text.
- b) Interpretive comprehension refers to meaning derived by reading “between the lines” in which reader perceives author intent or understands relationship between text elements that are not stated directly. Interpretative comprehension is text implicit; answer interpretative questions require the reader to draw conclusion in response to unstated cause- effect relationship or comparisons, perceptions of nuance, and /or symbolic use of language and ideas.

- c) Applied comprehension refers to meaning derived by reading “beyond the lines” in which the reader understands unstated relationship between information in text and information in his/ her prior knowledge base. Applied comprehension is scheme implicit (or experience based, if you refer) answer to questions at this level require integration of new information into the reader’s previous fund of knowledge, from which new relationship emerge.

In this research the researcher will combine the levels of reading comprehension in teaching process. Because the researcher want to know the students’ comprehension in every level and he will use the test to measure the every level of comprehension.

## 2. Comic Life

Whidden (2013) said that, Comic Life is a program for creating comics, created by Plasq for both Mac and Windows computers. It is considered a word processor of digital graphic writing. Comic Life is one kind of comics, from Comic Life software. It is made from one of company software, called Falsq Company. It is an award winning application for creating not just comics (obviously), but also annotated images, dynamic photo albums, greeting cards, scrap books, story books, and instruction guides and brochures.

In other hand, Roger (2013) said that, Comic Life is a fun application that lets you create a real life comic with your photos and images. Comic life is a tool to make comic easily because it has some applications in making comic. The result of comic life is called comic life too. Comic Life offers bunch of shapes, forms and lettering with styles reminiscent of the best cartoons and comics. All can be customized from the style attributes tab on the right. We also liked the filters, which lets you give a real atmosphere to your photos, like turning them into a scene from Sin City. Comic Life also features loads of templates and themes that you can start off with.

Some of applications just need to drag in to the board in our screen when creating or using its software. Comic Life allows creating page layouts with boxes for images and text. Styles can be applied to create just about any type of feel for document. Captions can be created with tails in order to have thought balloons, speech boxes or just additional annotations. Filters are available to turn digital images into a variety of hand drawn looking graphics to enhance the comic appearance of working.

Sarlitto (2007) explained that, there are some benefits of comic life in reading, Comic Life can make students more understanding in reading especially in narrative text, because it can tell from the introduction until the end of the story, plot, characters, time and setting, sequencing without needing sophisticated word decoding skills. Besides that comic can give visualisation

when students read the text while the students see the image or picture in comic.

In other hand, Gene in Bukisa (2003) said that there are five reason why comic can use as media of learning:

a) Motivating

Hutchinson found as the result of his experiment that 74% of teachers surveyed found comics helpful for motivation while 79% claimed comics increase individual participation. One teacher even complained that comic book made learning too easy. Thorndike and Downes also found that comic could motivate students they introduce their Supermen language arts workbook to classrooms. They found that the students had unusual interest and it as written.

b) Visual

As comic is composed by pictorial and other images, it is a fundamentally visual medium. Mixing from written and picture to be one can increase the students' comprehension to study.

c) Permanent

Using comic as learning media is much different with using film or animation. Although film and animation are also visual media but they can be said watched fleeting. Comic in other hand is permanent, plainly if students don't understand a scene of film or animation; they cannot repeat the unknown scene. But we can do this if we use comic.

d) Intermediary

Karl Koenke in Bukisa (2003) suggested that comic can lead students the discipline of reading, especially those who don't enjoy reading or have a fear of failure. Comic can be the first step of enjoying reading. Huagaard (1973) said that comic is able to transform reluctant reader into an avid fan.

e) Popular

We can say that our students are steeped in popular culture. Thimothy Morrison, Bryan and Chilcoat in Bukisa (2002) suggest that, incorporating popular culture into a curriculum, teachers can bridge the separation many students feel between their lives in out of school. Comic is a part of popular culture. We know that known well movies like Spiderman and Batman are produced from the comic. This will succeed the learning process.

### 3. Directed Reading Activities

The Directed Reading Activities is one of the strategies in teaching reading skill to guided students' comprehension. The Directed Reading Activity Betts in Martha (2005) said that the purpose of this strategy is to help the students in reading comprehension, removing barriers comprehension, encouraging guided

silent reading text and embedding skill development into lesson focusing on conceptual understanding.

During reading, the researcher asks individual students questions about the text to monitor their comprehension. After reading, the teacher engages students in a discussion focusing on the purpose for reading, and follow-up activities that focus on the content of the text and the specific skill that students learned to use.

There are five steps in the Directed Reading Activities, they are:

a) Preparation of Reading

There are two types of reading preparation. First vocabulary presentation, in vocabulary presentation students will identify unfamiliar words in text and after that looking for the meaning of words by using dictionary.

The second is focusing on students' attention on the subject matter and develops the students' concept background. In here the researcher asks to students some questions which has relation with title text. The purpose this activities to improve the students prior knowledge and their experience related the text will be given for them.

Beside that Robert in Marta (2005) adding this part with create interest. In this part the students must be given stimulus to motivate or interesting in reading so that they do not feel bore and to be enjoy in reading activities. The purpose of this preparation is to help students comprehend text by giving them information about new words and new concepts because they will encounter it in the text.

b) Guided Silent Reading

According to Jain (2008) silent reading can increase students' reading comprehension. Some of the advantage of silent reading:

- 1) This reading making the students very active and accurate
- 2) Silent reading concentrates the attention of students toward subject matter and he learns naturally.
- 3) It saves times because this activity is done at a time. All students practise together in this activity at a time.
- 4) It is very useful to develop the skill of reading fast.
- 5) This skill plays main role to increase the knowledge of students.

Besides that, Jain explains how to make silent reading is effective teaching:

- 1) Teacher should tell about the topic first to the learners and give motivate.
- 2) Teacher should not allow the students to murmuring while reading.
- 3) The subject matter should be interested and effective and selected from the reading material developed for it.
- 4) Elected approach can be used by teacher for better comprehension development.

c) Comprehension development



This is important step to know the students comprehension in reading. There are some strategies the researcher to know the students progressive in reading comprehension by doing discussion after students have read. They are:

- 1) Take the time to articulate clearly instructional objectives for units of study and lesson plan.
  - 2) Focus your time and energy on higher level question and initiate discussion with them.
  - 3) Do not afraid to let students learn from one another.
  - 4) After writing your question, check to see what comprehension's levels have addressed.
- d) Skill Development and Application

In this step the students can practice what they have got from the text such as the message, value and advantages of the text in their life. They can make conclusion to note them to be their reference. After that they explain with their friends in discussion.

- e) Extension and Follow –up Activities

This step, the researcher gives the students conclusion about the reading and explain what value they can get from reading. After that the researcher may give students assignment to be homework, such as asking to students to find reading text related with their lesson for next week to be their references.

### **Research Method**

In this research, the researcher concerned in quasi-experimental method, this was implemented in two groups. They were experimental and control group. The experimental group was given a treatment namely Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities, a treatment under investigation, while the control group was given a treatment without Comic Life. The researcher just provided the same material and will be applied by the researcher. The control group was needed for comparison purpose to prove if the treatment by using Comic Life through Reading Activities to increase students' reading comprehension. (Gay, 2006:254).

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Both groups were given pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was conducted before treatment to assess the students' prior knowledge on reading comprehension and the post-test was conducted to measure treatment effects. The aim of this test found out if using Comic Life could give effect to increase students' reading comprehension.

<b>E</b>	<b>O1</b>	<b>X 1</b>	<b>O2</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>O1</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>O2</b>

Table 3.1. Design of the research

Where:

- E = The experimental group
- C = The control group
- O1 = Pre- test
- O2 = Post- test
- X1 = The treatment by using Comic Life and DRA
- X2 = The treatment without Comic Life and DRA

## Findings

### 1. The students' reading comprehension achievement

Although both Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities and conventional way could be used in teaching reading and they could improve the students' achievement, however, the Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities developed the students' reading comprehension more meaningfully than the conventional one. Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities was able to change the students' reading comprehension better than before. So it could be inferred statistically based on t-test value that Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities was more effective in developing students' comprehension of literal, interperative and applied in reading skill.

Based on the result of the students' answers either in control or experimental group before and after treatment, the researcher noticed that students often did not understand the questions of the text. They would copy something from the text, sometimes totally missing the point of the question. As the researcher analyzed students' difficulties in reading comprehension, the researcher surmised that they had an underlying lack of linguistic competence in English that affected their reading. Some of the researcher's conclusions were their lack of vocabulary knowledge led to not recognizing the ideas of the reading, even when the question was literal and factual in the test. They also weak in interpretive the text given and it also makes them difficult to read applied.

Jain (2008) said that not only Difficulties of structure and knowledge of vocabulary will be prepared to be explanation in reading but also prepare of

material for developing students' speech and writing. After reading, students hope can explain the point of text and discuss with their friends so that material in this type must related with the curriculum and students level.

Therefore, the resercher used Comic life and Directed Reading Activities to increase students' reading skill. Thacher (2007) there are two foundation why comics in the classroom, they are:

The first is for the pre-reader, a comic can be purely graphical in nature and help provide practice with sequencing as well as concrete to abstract transitions using illustrations instead of written words. The written component of a comic can be introduced when the early readers are ready to connect words with images. Comics can help early readers or readers with language acquisition problems by providing visual clues to the context of the narrative.

The second is for more advanced readers, comic can contain all the complexity of 'normal' written material which the student must decode and comprehend, such as puns, alliteration, metaphors, symbolism, point of view, context, inference, and narrative structures. A comic can also be a stepping-stone to more complex and traditional written work. A single pane in a comic can represent paragraphs worth of written material in a manner that is enjoyable and effective for the early or challenged reader.

In applying Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities, the students are able improve the levels of reading comprehension. Those are literal, interpretive, and applied. Richards (1995) states that different types of reading comprehension are distinguished according to the readers' purposes and the type of reading that they use. In this case, the students showed their interest to make Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities while and after reading. The students also could improve their understanding of the elements of text like orientation, resolution of the text, how does the character look like, and the moral value of the text.

From the data showed in the pre- test and post- test the achievement of the students on their literal level of comprehension is increased where the data of post-test significantly improved from the distribution frequency of the result and the mean score as well as the standard deviation. The mean score of experimental group on literal level was 79.37 in pretest to 89.06 in posttest with the differences of mean score was 9.69, while the control group on literal level was 80.31 to 81.25 with the differences of mean score was 0.94.

The result of the students' achievement on the literal level of comprehension above indicates that the students had improvement to recognize the literal statements in the text. The students could explicitly or directly state the information given in the text; for example, main ideas, details, cause and effect and sequences written in the text.

On interpretive level, the mean score of the experimental group in post-test is also increased from the pre- test compared to the control group. The difference of the mean score was 21.25 with 60.00 for the pretest to 81.25 for the post- test.

Similar to the control group, it also shows a little improvement with the difference of the mean score were 10.31. Unfortunately, the control group did not show a significant improvement, it can be seen from the mean score of the pre- tests' result was 61.87 to 72.18 for the post- test.

On this interpretive level, the students give better respond to the text given by using the instruction or guided questions of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities. In this case, they are able to know the ideas that are not directly stated in the text. So, it will help the students in getting meanings from the text without hardly read the text repeatedly. Harber in Martha (2005) Interpretive comprehension refers to meaning derived by reading "between the lines" in which reader perceives author intent or understands relationship between text elements that are not stated directly. Interpretative comprehension is text implicit; answer interpretative questions require the reader to draw conclusion in response to unstated cause- effect relationship or comparisons, perceptions of nuance, and /or symbolic use of language and ideas.

Applied comprehension refers to meaning derived by reading "beyond the lines" in which the reader understands unstated relationship between information in text and information in his/ her prior knowledge base. Applied comprehension is scheme implicit (or experience based, if you refer) answer to questions at this level require integration of new information into the reader's previous fund of knowledge, from which new relationship emerge. It can be seen from the improvement of the experimental group on applied level of comprehension where the mean score before the treatment given was 33.43 to 75.62 after the treatment, while the control group was 34.68 to 56.87.

## **2. Students' interest.**

The questionnaire that was given to the experimental group covered general statements about interest toward reading comprehension by applying Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities. All these statements were related to the Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities of this research.

Based on the results of the research shows that most of students interest in Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities in learning English especially for reading skills. This is based on Table 4.14 showing that 13 students feel strongly agree and 19 students feel agree to the most of statement related to students' interest toward Comic Life through Reading Activities in learning English especially in teaching reading.

The interest of the students can be also shown from the mean score of the students' interest toward Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities. The mean score of the students' interest was 84.25 with the standard deviation 4.47 the mean score of students' interest was categorized as high interest with the interval score 69 – 84. It means that the students have high interest toward Comic Life

through Directed Reading Activities in learning English especially for reading comprehension.

The analysis showed that the application of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities in learning reading influenced to the students' interest. This means that there was a good applicable method in teaching reading comprehension. In other words, the students' interest is the indication of a degree of success that a foreign language student is likely to have in real given foreign language setting. As stated by Nasution in Setia (2006:31) that interest is something very necessary for someone in doing better activities. It can be stated that interest has very strong influence on someone to change the behavior or attitude in their profession.

In this study, the interest of students was considered as output because they were expected to have interest category toward the Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities. The students stated that learning reading comprehension by Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities was able to improve their interest in the process of study. Most of the students agreed in applying the Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities because it was able to improve the students' interest in learning reading.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes the result of this research as follows:

1. The use of Comic life through Directed Reading Activities in teaching reading comprehension improved the students' achievement, it's proved by the mean score of the students' post- test in experimental group is higher than control group. It can be seen from the students' mean score of post- test was 81.98 for Experimental Group, while for Control Group the students' mean score of post- test was 70.41, and the T- Test of the students' reading achievement in experimental and control group in posttest was smaller than  $(0.00 < 0.05)$ .
2. The use of Comic Life through Directd Reading Activities can make the students' interest in learning English especially in attending reading class. The students are interested in learning English through the use of Comic Life through Directd Reading Activities. It refers to the means score of the students' interest was 84.25 which is categorized as high interest. So, the conclusion is the students have high interest in reading comprehension by using of Comic Life through Directed Reading Activities.

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